



Dan Skopec
Acting Secretary

Air Resources Board

Robert F. Sawyer, Ph.D., Chair
1001 I Street • P.O. Box 2815
Sacramento, California 95812 • www.arb.ca.gov



Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

April 21, 2006

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS TO DISCUSS THE DRAFT STAFF REPORT AND DRAFT TECHNICAL SUPPORT DOCUMENT ON PROPOSED STATE AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS FOR NITROGEN DIOXIDE

Dear Sir or Madam:

The Air Resources Board (ARB) invites you to participate in public workshops to discuss a draft Staff Report and draft Technical Support Document titled "Review of the California Ambient Air Quality Standard for Nitrogen Dioxide." These documents contain findings from a review by staff of the ARB and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) of the scientific literature on nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and its human health effects, welfare effects, public exposure, and atmospheric chemistry. Based on the results of that review, OEHHA has submitted a health-based recommendation to revise the NO₂ standard.

Dates and locations of the workshops are listed below:

Date: Monday, May 8, 2006

Time: 10 a.m. – 12:00 Noon

Location: Sierra Hearing Room, Second Floor
California Environmental Protection Agency
1001 I Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Date: Thursday, May 11, 2006

Time: 1 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Location: Auditorium
Air Resources Board
9530 Telstar Avenue
El Monte, California 91730

At the workshops, staff from ARB and OEHHA will briefly summarize their findings and recommendations for the State nitrogen dioxide standard and respond to public questions and comments. The workshop on May 8 will be webcast at:

http://www.arb.ca.gov/app/calendar/cal_wbcst.php.

*The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption.
For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our website: <http://www.arb.ca.gov>.*

California Environmental Protection Agency

The draft Staff Report and draft Technical Support Document were released for public review on April 14, 2006. You may download them from our website at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/research/aaqs/no2-rs/no2-rs.htm>. If you do not have Internet access, please call Peter Mathews at (916) 323-8711 and we will provide a written copy.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is a pungent and reactive gas that, along with fine airborne particulate matter, contributes to the reddish-brown haze characteristic of smoggy air in California. NO₂ is one of the nitrogen oxides (NO_x) emitted from high-temperature combustion processes, such as those occurring in motor vehicles and power plants. Exposure to NO₂ is associated with adverse health effects including respiratory symptoms, episodes of respiratory illness, and reduced lung function.

An ambient air quality standard (AAQS) is the legal definition of clean air. The AAQS establishes the maximum allowable levels of air pollutants that can be present in outdoor air for a given averaging time without causing harmful health effects to most people. California ambient air quality standards are defined in Health and Safety Code section 39014 and in Title 17, California Code of Regulations, section 70101. Four elements comprise the standard: 1) A definition of the air pollutant, 2) an averaging time, 3) a pollutant concentration, and 4) a monitoring method to determine concentrations of the pollutant.

The current California AAQS for NO₂ is 0.25 ppm averaged over one-hour, not to be exceeded. The draft Staff Report includes OEHHA's recommendations on revising the State ambient air quality standard for NO₂. Based on the results of the staff review, OEHHA has recommended that the existing NO₂ standard be revised as follows:

1. Lower the existing 1-hour-average standard for nitrogen dioxide to 0.18 ppm, not to be exceeded.
2. Establish a new annual average standard for nitrogen dioxide at 0.030 ppm, not to be exceeded.

The draft Technical Support Document is a review and evaluation of the scientific literature on public exposure, atmospheric chemistry, health effects, and welfare effects of exposure to NO₂. The draft Staff Report provides a summary and overview of the ambient air quality standard review process, summary of the Technical Support Document, staff findings, and OEHHA recommendations for the standard.

The draft Staff Report and draft Technical Support Document will be peer-reviewed by the Air Quality Advisory Committee (AQAC) on June 12-13, 2006 at a public meeting. The AQAC is a scientific peer review committee appointed by the Office of the President

of the University of California to independently evaluate the scientific basis of staff findings and recommendations presented in the draft Staff and Technical Documents. The AQAC will also consider comments from the public.

Comments received by the close of business Wednesday, May 31, 2006 will be forwarded to the AQAC for their consideration. There will also be time for public comment at the AQAC meeting. Please visit our website at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/research/aags/no2-rs/no2-rs.htm> for further updates on the workshops, dates, time, and location of the upcoming AQAC meeting. Updates will also be sent via ARB's electronic list serve. To subscribe, please enroll at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/listserv/aags.htm>.

Following the meeting of the AQAC, staff will revise the draft Staff Report and draft Technical Support Document based on comments received from AQAC members and the public. The revised Staff Report and Technical Support Document will be made available for a 45-day public comment period in advance of a public meeting of the Air Resources Board to consider amending the NO₂ standard based upon the OEHHA and AQAC recommendations, the ARB staff's final recommendations, and public comments.

If you need disability-related accommodations, please go to: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/html/ada/ada.htm> for assistance or contact the ADA Coordinator at (916) 323-4916. If you require assistance in a language other than English, please go to: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/as/eeo/languageaccess.htm> or contact the Bilingual Coordinator at (916) 324-5049.

If you have questions regarding the review of the nitrogen dioxide standard, please contact me at (916) 323-8413 or rbode@arb.ca.gov. If you have questions regarding the workshops, please contact Norman Kado, Ph.D., (916) 323-1500 or nkado@arb.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Richard Bode, Chief
Health and Exposure Assessment Branch
Research Division

cc: Norman Kado, Ph.D.
Research Division

Peter Mathews
Research Division